

- 1935 Bredius: 12, 260, repro. (also 1936 English ed.: 11, 260, repro.).
 1942 Widener: 6.
 1948 Widener: unpaginated, repro.
 1948 Rosenberg, 1: 59; 2: fig. 98 (also 1964 ed.: 111, fig. 98).
 1948 Douglas: 68–74.
 1959 Widener: 41.
 1963 Walker: 313, repro.
 1965 NGA: 110.
 1966 Bauch: 12, no. 214, repro.
 1968 NGA: 98, repro.
 1969 Gerson/Bredius: 539, 569, no. 260A, repro.
 1969 Washington: no. 5.
 1975 NGA: 288–289, repro.
 1975 Walker: 273, no. 362.
 1985 NGA: 334, repro.

1937.1.79 (79)

Rembrandt Workshop

Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife

1655
 Oil on canvas, 105.7 x 97.8 (41 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 38 $\frac{1}{2}$)
 Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions

In lower right corner: *Rembrandt. f.1655.*

Technical Notes The original fabric support, consisting of a large piece (98.8 x 90.6 cm) with strips (6 cm in width) sewn onto the left and bottom edges, was transferred in 1854 to fabric with an open-weave, gauze-like fabric interleaf. In 1935 the transfer fabric was removed and the painting relined, with the interleaf retained. Sanding of the back of the original fabric during transfer removed the weave and cusping patterns and may have removed an original ground layer, had a double ground been employed. Only a single original layer is evident, a tan ground present on the main fabric and edge strips, situated above a white ground that was presumably added during transfer.¹ A black imprimatura was found under the figures of Joseph and the wife, and the tan ground was employed as a mid-tone in the wife's hair.

Paint is applied in complex, thin layers of medium-rich paint, creating a heavily textured surface enriched with transparent glazes. The x-radiograph and infrared reflectogram reveal changes, often visible as pentimenti, in the wife's proper right sleeve and index finger, above Potiphar's proper right wrist, and in the red cape, which was extended to the right. Abrasion in the background reveals remnants of a canopy, visible in infrared light, that initially was between Joseph and Potiphar.

Moderate abrasion is found in the background and in the dress of Potiphar's wife, along with moderate-sized losses, particularly in Potiphar and the background. Losses exist on all edges and along the seams of the narrow edge strips, where the paint application is original and consistent with the handling in the larger fabric piece. Conservation was carried out in 1979 to remove discolored varnish and soluble retouchings.

Provenance: Gerard Hoet, Jr. [d. 1760], The Hague; (sale, The Hague, 25 August 1760, no. 44).² Johan Ernst Gotzkowsky [1710–1775], Berlin; acquired in 1763 by Catherine II, empress of Russia [1729–1796]; Imperial Hermitage Gallery, Saint Petersburg; sold January 1931 through (Matthiesen Gallery, Berlin, P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London, and M. Knoedler & Co., New York) to Andrew W. Mellon, Pittsburgh and Washington; deeded 1 May 1937 to The A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, Pittsburgh.

Exhibited: *Rembrandt: Loan Exhibition of Rembrandt Paintings*, Knoedler Galleries, New York, 1933, no. 10. *A Century of Progress: Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture*, Art Institute of Chicago, 1934, no. 105. Amsterdam 1935, no. 17. Washington 1969, no. 13. *Gods, Saints & Heroes: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt*, National Gallery of Art, Washington; Detroit Institute of Arts; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 1980–1981, no. 28. *In Quest of Excellence: Civic Pride, Patronage, Connoisseurship*, Center for the Fine Arts, Miami, 1984, no. 52. *Painting the Bible in Rembrandt's Holland*, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 1993. *Im Lichte Rembrandts, Das Alte Testament im Goldenen Zeitalter der Niederländischen Kunst*, Westfälisches Landesmuseum, Münster, 1994, no. 25.

THIS PAINTING depicts an episode in the life of Joseph that is described in the Book of Genesis, chapter 39. Joseph, who had been sold to Potiphar, an officer of the pharaoh, came to be trusted and honored in Potiphar's household. He was, however, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, Iempsar, of trying to violate her, after her attempts at seduction had failed. When he fled from her, she held on to his robe and eventually used it as evidence against him. In this painting Iempsar recounts her tale to Potiphar as she gestures toward Joseph's red robe draped over the bedpost. While Potiphar listens intently to the story, Joseph, dressed in a long, brown tunic and with the keys denoting his household responsibilities hanging from his belt, stands serenely on the far side of the bed.

The story of Joseph was one that fascinated Rembrandt, for he devoted a large number of drawings, prints, and paintings to the life of this Old Testament figure. While his primary source of inspiration was undoubtedly the Bible, he also drew upon other literary traditions to amplify his understanding of the biblical text. Tümpel has argued that, in particular, Flavius Josephus' *Of the Antiquities of the Jews* was extremely important for Rembrandt's interpretations of Old Testament scenes.³ Rembrandt owned an expensive German edition of Flavius Josephus, which is listed in the 1656 inventory of his possessions, the year after the execution of this painting.⁴ Tümpel sees the pronounced focus on the bed in *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife* as a direct response on Rembrandt's part to the emphasis placed on the bed in Josephus' account of this scene. In the text found



Rembrandt Workshop, *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife*, 1937.1.79

in *Of the Antiquities of the Jews*, Potiphar's wife accuses Joseph with the following words: "O husband, said she, mayst thou not live a day longer, if thou dost not punish the wicked slave, who has desired to defile thy bed..."⁵

In one important respect the confrontation depicted in this painting varies from both Flavius Josephus' account and the biblical text: all three protagonists are present at the time of the accusation. In neither account is Joseph's presence mentioned. Rembrandt often took such liberties with biblical texts to enhance the emotional poignancy of the scene.⁶ Here the setting has been carefully conceived to reinforce the essential drama of the accusation. Potiphar's wife is the main protagonist, for it is around her accusation that the drama revolves. Strongly lit and centrally placed, she gestures across the white sheets of the bed to Joseph's red robes as she turns toward her husband to recount her story. At the same time she brings her left hand to her chest, holding up her chemise in a gesture that imparts at once innocence and modesty. Joseph, placed by himself on the far side of the expansive bed, appears isolated and vulnerable as he stares toward the red robe and involuntarily raises his hand in protest. Potiphar, dressed in a turban and an oriental costume, is effectively placed on the far right so that as his wife confides in him she must simultaneously turn away from Joseph. As Potiphar leans toward Iempsar, he rests his hand on the back of her chair and listens attentively. While Potiphar has directed his gaze at Joseph's robe, his relaxed pose makes it apparent that he has not yet fully grasped the import of her story.

It is difficult to determine whether Rembrandt invented this compositional concept purely from his own imagination or derived it from an earlier pictorial source. As was first mentioned by Bauch, Jan Pynas (c. 1585–after 1650) included Joseph in his 1629 depiction of the same scene, but the compositional connections are not strong.⁷ Pynas does not include the bed and depicts a member of Potiphar's household holding Joseph. A more probable source of inspiration is Vondel's play *Joseph in Egypten*, first performed in 1639/1640, in which all three protagonists appear on the stage at the time of Iempsar's accusation.⁸ Schwartz, who has also emphasized this connection with Vondel's play, has further noted that the production held in 1655 was a particular success, with a woman in the role of Iempsar.⁹ Even though Joseph appears on stage at the end of Iempsar's accusation rather than at the beginning, as would seem to be the case in the painting, the theatrical character of the image suggests that the play

may have been an important source of inspiration for this work.

There seems good reason, however, to believe that the choice of subject matter was not entirely the result of external influences. The decision to paint in 1655 this image of false accusation speaks too closely to Rembrandt's personal circumstances to be entirely coincidental. Rembrandt may have been drawn to the subject because he was beset at this time by accusations from a woman scorned, Geertje Dirckx. In 1649 she sued Rembrandt for breach of promise, a suit that was followed by years of litigation.¹⁰ The theme of false accusation also arises in Mantegna's drawing *Calumny of Apelles*, which Rembrandt owned and copied at about this time.¹¹

Complicating any assessment of this work, however, is the existence of a comparable painting of *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife* in Berlin that is also signed Rembrandt and dated 1655 (fig. 1). In this version the three protagonists are placed in relatively the same position, although the drama here is expressed at a higher pitch. Joseph responds vigorously to Iempsar's accusation by looking upward and raising his left hand near his head. Iempsar accuses Joseph directly rather than indirectly through the medium of the discarded robe. As though to emphasize her disdain for Joseph she steps on the robe as it lies strewn over a step on the floor. Her body language is more active than in the Washington version: she turns at an angle in her chair, she has her legs crossed, and her facial expression seems quite agitated. Whereas the Iempsar of the Washington painting, dressed in jewelry and an ermine-lined orange robe, appears composed, the Iempsar in the Berlin version seems more disheveled: she wears no jewelry, and the richly brocaded surface of her robe is broken by numerous folds. Finally, the surface of the Berlin version is further enlivened by the elaborate gilded bedpost near Joseph.

The date inscribed on *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife* was a matter of great dispute in the early literature on the painting. Waagen in 1864 read the date of the Washington painting (when it was in the Hermitage) as 1657.¹² The Hermitage catalogue of 1870, however, interpreted the date as reading 1654, which would mean that this version predated the one presently in Berlin. Bode in 1883 and again in 1901 also agreed that the Hermitage version was originally dated 1654, but he believed that Rembrandt changed the "4" to a "5" when he reworked the painting the following year.¹³ Despite the opinion of Michel and later Somof, in his catalogue of the Hermitage paintings of 1901, that the date should read 1655 and that the so-called 4 was a misreading due to accidental

effects on the surface, Bode's suggestion continued to be accepted by most scholars until Bredius' 1935 catalogue of Rembrandt paintings.¹⁴

The subtle yet profound differences in concept in the Washington and Berlin paintings were, as a consequence of this confusion about the date, explained in relation to Rembrandt's chronological evolution. As late as the 1970s, for example, Kauffmann argued that the earlier double-dating hypothesis should not be ignored in considering which of these two paintings came first. He felt that it would have been unlikely for Rembrandt to have painted the emotionally charged Berlin version and then to have proceeded to the less dramatic, and to his mind, less successful Washington version.¹⁵

Opinions about the relative success of the two compositions that Kauffmann raised had concerned art historians ever since the late nineteenth century. Most argued that the Berlin version, in Michel's words, was "not only more dramatic in composition..., [but] more brilliant in colour, and in better condition" than the Hermitage [Washington] example.¹⁶ Bode, who considered the Berlin version to be later, saw in it "slight, but essentially advantageous alterations," but felt that, in the end, both "pictures are of the highest excellence in such qualities as the choice of the colours, splendour of harmony, and vigour of illumination."¹⁷ Neumann, in 1905, preferred the Berlin version as later did Rosenberg, who wrote that it was "superior to the one in Washington, its general effect being both richer and more striking."¹⁸ The Washington painting, however, has had its defenders. In 1936, the year after the painting had been exhibited at the Rijksmuseum, the museum's director, Schmidt-Degener, was reported to have remarked that the painting was "infinitely superior to the Berlin picture; in fact, he now began to even doubt the latter as being altogether by Rembrandt."¹⁹ Benesch wrote in 1943 that the Washington version "surpasses that of Berlin in depth of psychological expression. But the Berlin version seems to be a step further in pictorial refinement, so we may regard it as the later."²⁰

Since the 1960s, however, the general consensus has been not only that the Berlin version is superior, but also that the Washington painting is a workshop replica. This opinion was first expressed in 1966 when Bauch proposed that the comparatively muted depiction of the scene in the Washington painting was the creation of a good student who was following the Berlin example. He argued as well that Rembrandt subsequently reworked the painting and then signed it.²¹ Gerson allowed that Bauch might be proved correct in his assessment, but stressed that

the quality of the picture was difficult to assess because of the heavy varnish and "curious 'craquelure'" that covered the surface.²² While Schwartz accepted both versions as by Rembrandt, Tümpel removed the Washington painting from Rembrandt's oeuvre, calling it "nur eine schwachere Werkstattwiederholung."²³

While the restoration of the painting in 1979–1980 did not resolve issues of chronology and date, the removal of several layers of pigmented varnish with pronounced craquelure that had obscured the image did allow a clearer assessment of the pictorial qualities of the Washington version.²⁴ Two significant pentimenti were revealed, changes that were intended to strengthen the narrative (fig. 2). Iemphar originally gestured toward Joseph's robes with her fingers cupped. Only later was the index finger extended to direct the eye's attention to this significant item of clothing. At the same time the robe itself was enlarged to give it more presence within the composition.

The restoration confirmed that the surface had suffered from numerous small losses and general

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*, oil on canvas, 1655, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie

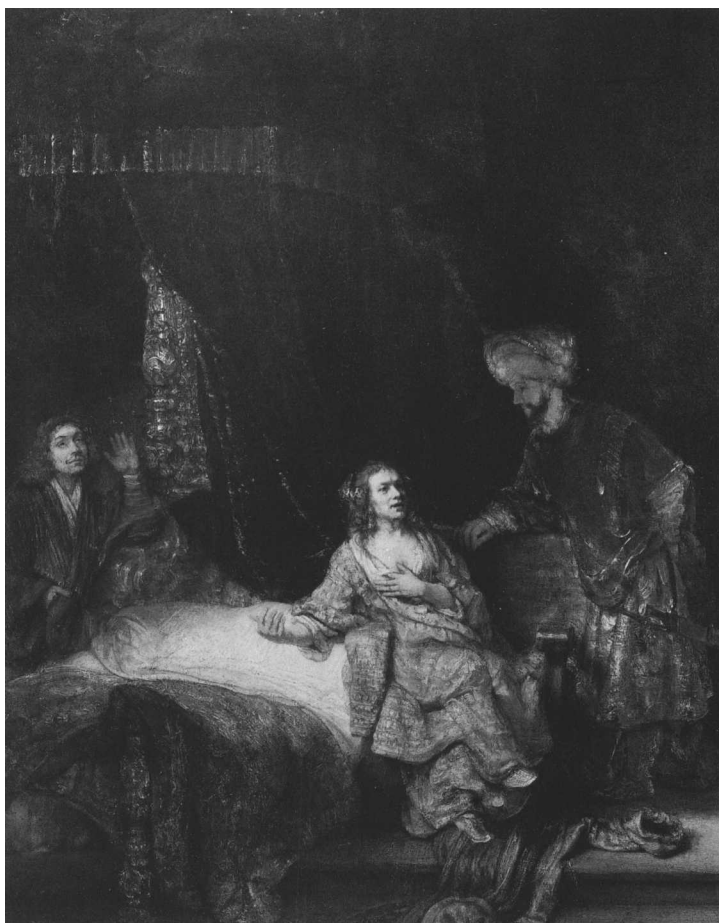


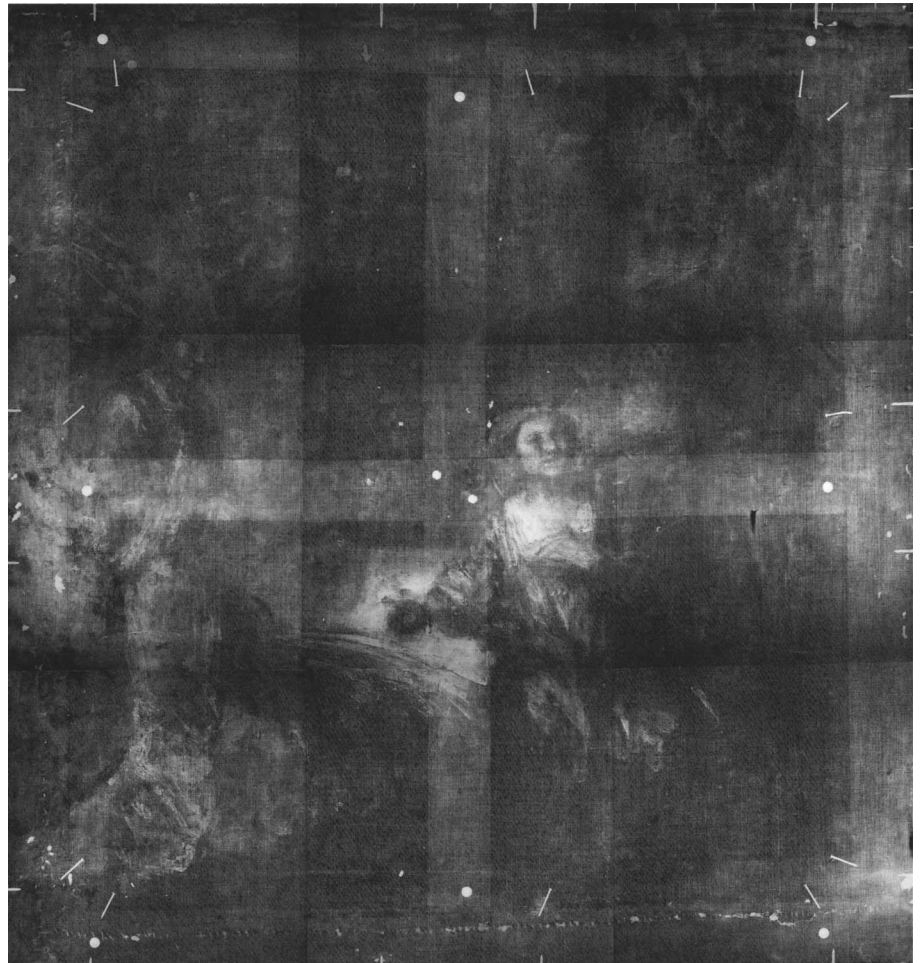


Fig. 2. Infrared reflectogram of hand and robe in 1937.1.79

abrasion, particularly in the blue drapes behind the bed. In part the damages may have resulted when the painting was transferred from an old canvas to a new one by E. Sivers in 1854 in Saint Petersburg.²⁵ Because of the transfer, much information about ground layers and paint structure has been irretrievably lost. Nevertheless, x-radiographs do reveal that the original support consisted of three pieces of canvas, a large center piece with a six-centimeter strip along the left side and a six-centimeter strip across the bottom (fig. 3).²⁶ Evidence of the seams along these additions is also seen in the pattern of losses on the surface of the painting, which are easily identifiable in a photograph taken during restoration.

While technical examinations of the available ground layers and paint provide no evidence to suggest that these strips were later additions, it is most unlikely that the composition was originally conceived on a support with this unusual configuration. The decision thus must have been made during the course of execution that the composition should be enlarged in the foreground and to the left of Joseph. Perhaps it was thought that the floor did not recede properly under the feet of Potiphar's wife and

Fig. 3. X-radiograph of 1937.1.79



that Joseph appeared too cramped on the far side of the bed. Whatever the reasons for the additions, the result is that the figures are set back more into space and the dim half-lights of the bedchamber take on a greater atmospheric role in the presentation of the drama. They seem, in fact, to reinforce the subtle, understated interpretation of the accusation by Potiphar's wife that is depicted.

Whether or not the change in the shape of the composition provides evidence about the chronological relationship of the Washington and Berlin versions is difficult to determine. The Washington painting, before the strips were added to the left side and the bottom, measured approximately 98.8 x 90.6 cm, whereas the Berlin canvas measures 113.5 x 90 cm. Thus the widths of the two paintings appear to have been originally the same although the vertical dimensions differ.²⁷ Before the strip was added to the left of the Washington support Joseph would have been quite near the left edge, rather as he is in the Berlin painting. The addition along the bottom coincides almost exactly to the placement of the step in the Berlin painting, a device that is effectively used to place the figures back in space.²⁸ On the one hand, it would seem illogical, given the similarity in the positions of Joseph in the original composition and in the Berlin painting, to assume that the Washington painting, with its additions, preceded the Berlin version; on the other hand, it could also be argued that the change in composition along the bottom edge should not have been necessary had the Berlin painting been available as a point of reference. The most plausible conclusion appears to be that the paintings were being conceived simultaneously and that arguments about chronological precedence are essentially irrelevant to the compositional solutions arrived at in these works. Indeed, while these paintings obviously have many similarities, each is also consistent unto itself, not only in the way the story is presented, but also in the textures, colors, and painting techniques used to characterize the scene.²⁹

Should the two paintings have been executed at more or less the same time, one must wonder whether it would have been likely for Rembrandt to have executed both works. He may have done so to demonstrate how, with essentially the same composition, two quite different representations of the scene could be created. More likely, however, is that two different artists painted these works. Indeed, close comparisons of the painting techniques in these works demonstrate a quite different sense of modeling. An excellent point of comparison is the wife's left hand, which in the Washington version is softly modeled with extended strokes of the brush, while

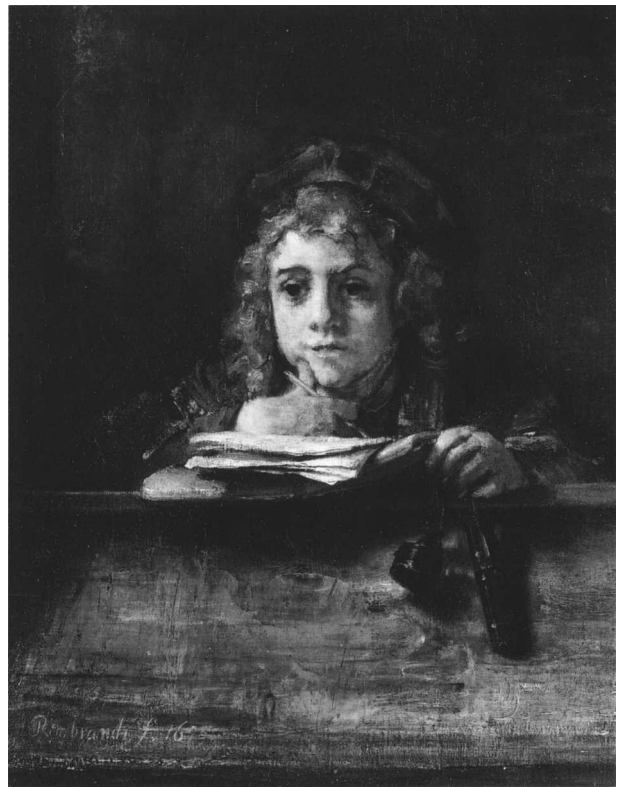


Fig. 4. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Titus*, oil on canvas, 1655, Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen

in the Berlin version it is more boldly formed with a rougher, more broken technique. Similar comparisons can be made in the modeling of her face and robes.

Comparisons indicate that a more adept hand executed the Berlin version. With a close examination of technique in the Washington painting comes an awareness that the anatomical forms, the hand and eyes, for example, and the folds in the robes are, in fact, not modeled with a convincing sense of three-dimensional form.³⁰ This weakness is also evident in the figures of Potiphar and Joseph. Although Joseph's attenuated form is sympathetically rendered, it remains quite flat. In the end, despite the many Rembrandtesque characteristics of this work, one must conclude that Rembrandt did not execute it. There is also no evidence that he reworked the painting, as proposed by Bauch, although he may well have suggested the additions and the change in the wife's gesture. Whether or not Rembrandt was responsible for the Berlin version is a different matter. Perhaps he was, but it may well be that this too was executed by an assistant, with both artists working from a common source.³¹ At the very least it

would seem that models, assuming the poses of the protagonists, must have been arranged in the studio. In the Washington painting the model for Joseph was almost certainly Titus, Rembrandt's fourteen-year-old son (fig. 4).

Too little, however, is known of the character of Rembrandt's workshop in 1655 to assess what type of working arrangements actually existed at that time, or, for that matter, which assistants he might have had working with him. Willem Drost (active 1650s) and Constantijn van Renesse (1626–1680) are two artists capable of painting such sensitive religious images. Renesse's style is indeed rather close to that seen in the Washington *Joseph Accused by Potiphar's Wife*.³² His forms tend to lack strong three-dimensional characterization, and his figures are often attenuated in a manner quite similar to that of Joseph in his *Good Samaritan* in the Louvre, Paris (see p. 307, fig. 7). Nevertheless, it is very possible that Renesse had already left Rembrandt's workshop by 1654, for in that year he was named secretary of the city of Eindhoven. Whichever Rembrandt pupil actually executed this work, it does seem clear that, at the very least, the choice of subject and composition were determined by the master himself.

Notes

1. The ground, consisting of iron oxides, Van Dyck brown, and quartz sand, is apparently the same on both the main fabric and edge strips. Pigment analysis (XRF and cross-sections) of ground and paint layers is available in the Scientific Research department (17 April 1979, 18 April 1979, 6 August 1979, and 26 November 1979).

2. Hoet 1752–1770, 3: 225, no. 44. The painting, which was described as a “kapitaal en uitmuntend stuk,” sold for fl 100.

3. Tümpel in Vekeman and Müller Hofstede 1984, 173–204; and reissued in an abbreviated form in Amsterdam 1991, 194–206. Flavius Josephus, who was born in Jerusalem shortly after Christ's death, based his text not only on the Old Testament but also on Jewish legends and antique writers. His work was translated into many languages and widely distributed.

4. Strauss and Van der Meulen 1979, 379, no. 284: “Een hoogduitsche Flavio Fevus gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman” (a ‘Flavius Josephus’ in High German profusely illustrated by Tobias Stimmer).

5. *The Genuine Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston, 4 vols. (London, 1755), 1: 82–83. (*Of the Antiquities of the Jews*, book 2, chapter 4, section 5.)

6. In his *The Visitation*, 1640 (Detroit Institute of Arts, inv. no. 27.200), Rembrandt depicted the aged Zacharias descending the stairs to greet Mary, although Elizabeth's husband is not mentioned in this biblical episode.

7. Bauch 1960, 258, note 96. Pynas' painting, which is in the Alfred Bader Collection, Milwaukee, is also mentioned in this context by Christian Tümpel, “Religious History Painting,” in Washington 1980, 51, fig. 6.

8. Joost van den Vondel, *Joseph in Egypten*, act. 5, verse 1348: “...daer komt die fraeie gast,” as quoted in Kauffmann 1973, 52. The connection between this painting and Vondel's play appears to have first been made by Wustmann 1906, 81–84.

9. Schwartz 1984/1985, 274–275. Schwartz identifies the actors as Adriana van den Bergh, her husband Gillis Nooseman (Potiphar), and Cornelis Laurensz. Krook (Joseph).

10. Geertje Dirckx was released from the Gouda house of correction on 31 May 1655 after having spent five years confined in the “Spinhuis.” Rembrandt purportedly tried to prevent her release and wanted to keep her there for another eleven years. For documents relating to this matter see Strauss and Van der Meulen 1979, 327, doc. 1655/2; 340, doc. 1656/5.

11. Kauffmann 1973, 53–57.

12. Waagen 1864, 179, no. 794. In this dating he follows De Köhne 1863, no. 794.

13. Bode 1883, 508, 599, no. 319; Bode 1897–1906, 6: 34, no. 401.

14. Michel 1893 (English trans. 1894), 2: 80; Somof 1901, 2: 308, no. 794. “Il se peut, du reste, que ce trait soit simplement l'effet du hasard, et qu'il soit produit bien plus tard, lors du nettoyage ou du rentoilage du tableau...” Bredius 1935, no. 523, dated the painting 1655 without further comment.

15. Kauffmann 1973, 50–51.

16. Michel 1893 (English trans. 1894), 2: 80.

17. Bode 1897–1906, 6: 3.

18. Rosenberg 1948, 1: 137.

19. From M. Knoedler & Co., letter, 10 March 1936, in NGA curatorial files. Schmidt-Degener's reactions seem to have been inspired by a recent restoration of the painting. Nothing is known about the restoration other than that the painting was relined in Amsterdam in 1935 by C. M. Jenner (an inscription in Dutch indicating this information is on the inside of the stretcher).

20. Benesch 1943, 27. Benesch's opinion about the chronological precedence of the Washington version was influenced by the relationship he saw between this painting and a drawing in the Graphische Sammlung, Munich (inv. 1448). He felt that the drawing was a preparatory study for this work. See Ben., 5: 277, no. 958. The drawing, however, belongs to a notorious group of forgeries of Rembrandt drawings in Munich and cannot be considered within this context. See Rosenberg 1959, 108–119.

21. Bauch 1966, no. 33.

22. Gerson/Bredius 1969, 601, no. 523.

23. Tümpel in Vekeman and Müller Hofstede 1984, 189; Tümpel 1986, 419–420, no. A2; and Tümpel in Amsterdam 1991, 200.

24. The “curious ‘craquelure’” that Gerson had complained about in 1969 (see note 21) was from the heavy varnish layers.

25. The information comes from an inscription on the back of the painting.

26. It cannot be determined whether further alterations were made to the size of the original support.

27. The figures in the Berlin painting, however, are closer to the top edge than they are in the Washington version. The possibility that the Washington painting has been trimmed along that edge should not be excluded.

28. The step, however, makes no logical sense in that it runs under the bed; thus the bedposts at the foot of the bed rest on a lower level than those at the head of the bed.

29. For an assessment of the different character of the interpretations of the story in these two paintings see Bal 1991, 105–108.

30. I would like to thank Ernst van de Wetering for sharing with me his observations about these areas when he examined the painting in 1989.

31. The overly dramatic gesture of Joseph as he looks heavenward is quite uncharacteristic for Rembrandt in the mid-1650s. It is a gesture, however, that does appear in Willem Drost's drawing of *The Lament for Abel* (see Sumowski 1979–1992, 3: 1204, no. 553^x, repro.). This coincidence, as well as the relatively bold brushwork with thick impastos, which relates to Drost's known works, suggests that he may have been responsible for the Berlin version.

32. For an analysis of Renesse's style and biographical information on the artist, see *The Descent from the Cross* (pp. 301–309).

References

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 1828 Hermitage: 57.
 1829–1842 Smith, 7 (1836): 8–9, no. 21.
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 1868 Vosmaer: 276, 490 (also 1877 2nd ed.: 551).
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 1923 Meldrum: 201, pl. 396.
 1933 “American Art Notes”: 275–277, repro.
 1933 Watson: 1–2, repro.
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 1935 Bredius: 24, 523, repro. (also 1936 English ed.: 24, 523, repro.).
 1935 Chamot: 199–205, repro.
 1935 Rich: 3–5, repro.
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 1941 NGA: 31, no. 79, repro.
 1943 Benesch: 20–33, fig. 8 (also reprint in Benesch

- 1970, 1: 140–146, fig. 69).
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 1949 Mellon: 85, repro.
 1954 Münz: 114.
 1954–1957 Ben. 5 (1957): 277 (also 1973 enlarged ed., 5: 265).
 1960 Roger-Marx: 72–73, 280.
 1960a Goldscheider: 177 no. 85, repro. 85.
 1965 Krieger: 14.
 1965 NGA: 109, no. 79.
 1966 Bauch: 3, 33, repro.
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 1968 NGA: 96, no. 79, repro.
 1968 Gerson: 114, 116, 362–363, repro., 499.
 1969 Gerson/Bredius: 432, repro., 601.
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 1970 Benesch, in Benesch 1970, 1: 83–100, fig. 69.
 1973 Kauffmann, in Simson and Kelch 1973: 50–57, repro. 14.
 1973 Klessmann, in Simson and Kelch 1973: 44–49.
 1974 Potterton: 268–273.
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 1980 Washington: no. 28.
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 1986 Tümpel: 419, A2.
 1986 Sutton: 312.
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 1991 Tümpel, in Amsterdam 1991: 194–206.
 1992 NGA: 131, color repro.
 1994 Münster: no. 252.

1937.1.75 (75)

Rembrandt Workshop

A Woman Holding a Pink

1656
 Oil on canvas, 102.9 x 86 (40½ x 33¾)
 Andrew W. Mellon Collection

Inscriptions

At upper right: *Rembrandt. f.1656*

Technical Notes: The support, a tightly woven, fine-weight fabric, has been lined with the tacking margins trimmed. Cusping is visible along all edges in the x-radiograph, indicating the original dimensions have been retained. The thick complex ground appears to consist of four layers, a dark brown layer followed by a yellow layer, and again a brown layer followed by a yellow one.¹

Thin paint layers were applied in paste consistency, worked both wet into wet and wet on wet with low brush-marking. The background layer extends under the figure,